

Message Text

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PAGE 01 SANTIA 00458 202004Z
ACTION ARA-14

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E. O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: ELAB, AID, CI
SUBJECT: CANCELLATION OF GLEASON TRIP TO CHILE

REF: STATE 13139

1. THE UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT HAS STATED OFTEN ITS SUPPORT FOR THE ESTABLISHMENT AND CONTINUATION OF A DEMOCRATIC TRADE UNION MOVEMENT AS AN ESSENTIAL PART OF DEMOCRATIC PROCESSES WITHIN A FREE SOCIETY. DURING HIS AUGUST 1977 VISIT TO SANTIAGO ASSISTANT SECRETARY TERENCE TODMAN SPECIFICALLY IDENTIFIED A FREE SOCIETY WITH A FREE TRADE UNION MOVEMENT. GLEASON'S VISIT TO CHILE WOULD HAVE BEEN AN IMPORTANT STEP TOWARDS REINFORCING THIS IDENTIFICATION AND ENCOURAGING THE GOC TO BEGIN THE PROCESS OF ACCEPTING A FREE AND OPEN TRADE UNION MOVEMENT.

2. THE CANCELLATION OF HIS VISIT IS A DEEP DISAPPOINTMENT FOR US LABOR POLICY IN CHILE FOR TWO REASONS. FIRST, GLEASON IS A STRONG WELL-KNOWN ANTI COMMUNIST LABOR LEADER WHICH MAKES HIM PARTICULARLY ACCEPTABLE TO THE VEHILEAN JUNTA. SECOND AND MORE IMPORTANTLY, GLEASON IS AN EQUALLY STRONG AND OUTSPOKEN DEFENDER OF HUMAN AND TRADE UNION RIGHTS THROUGHOUT THE WORLD AND COULD BE EXPECTED TO BLUNTLY TELL THE GOVERNMENT OF CHILE AND THE STATE CONTROLLED TRADE UNION LEADERS THAT DUE PROCESS AND DEMOCRATIC PROCEDURES ARE THE ONLY FOUNDATIONS OF A FREE LABOR MOVEMENT IN A FREE SOCIETY. THIS MESSAGE COMING FROM GLEASON

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WOULD HAVE MADE A STRONG IMPRESSION ON THE GOC.

3. WE HOPE THAT THE GLEASON VISIT CAN BE RESCHEDULED FOR A LATER DATE. FAILING THAT, WE UNDERSTAND THAT BRAC VICE PRESIDENT JACK OTERO AND CWA PRESIDENT GLEN WATTS WILL ALSO BE TRAVELLING DURING JANUARY AND FEBRUARY IN LATIN AMERICA. WE WOULD STRONGLY RECOMMEND THAT THE DEPARTMENT ENCOURAGE A SOLIDARITY VISIT BY

THESE MEN TO CHILE, OR ALTERNATIVELY THAT ONE OF AMERICAN
TRADE UNION DELEGATIONS NOW GOING TO OTHER LATIN AMERICAN
COUNTRIES BE DIVERTED TEMPORARILY TO SANTIAGO.
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